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Happy Days
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THE LATE BISHOP HICKS.

[Frontispiece.]

HAPPY DAYS AND HAPPY WORK
IN
BASUTOLAND.

BY
DEACONESS MARIA S. B. BURTON.

WITH A PREFACE

BY
THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP WEBB,
DEAN OF SALISBURY.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE TRACT COMMITTEE.

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TO
LADY LAGDEN
BY THE WRITER.



PREFACE.

I HAVE frequently visited Basutoland and Maseru, and have some personal knowledge of the mission work, which the author of this little book describes. And now, after a recent visit to the mission, in Lent of 1901, I am able to bear willing testimony to the soundness of its foundations as having been well and truly laid, during many years of preparation, in earnest prayers and persevering self-sacrifice. The writer gives us a simple story of personal faith and devotion, only told in the hope that it may help to draw out fuller practical sympathy and interest on behalf of the work itself. In order to realize what mission work means in its struggles and refreshments, we need not only such a general view of it as some careful observer from without might set before us, but also a picture drawn from within of individual experience and some details of everyday life and labour. This the reader will find in what he may rest assured is a thoroughly truthful narrative, simple and unadorned, of woman's work actually taken in hand by a Churchwoman in one corner of the far-stretching scene of that conflict, which is everywhere being waged between the servants and handmaids of the Lord and the Prince of Darkness, whose power has been so long entrenched in the social habits and customs of heathen tribes and people.

Even in its day of small things the work, of

which the Deaconess writes, has won the appreciation of the Government officials and civilians, without whose favour, indeed, it could not have been begun. Sir Godfrey Lagden, whose wise and considerate management of the Basuto people during the war is known to all men, has been a kind friend to the author. I am allowed also to quote from a letter of his successor, the present Resident, Mr. Sloley, the following cordial expression of his good will :—

“I am glad to be able to give my testimony as to the advantage the Mission has been to the natives of this place, and as to the excellent influence its religious and industrial training has had among them. We shall all rejoice if you are able to return with means for the continuance and extension of this good work. The Government fully recognizes the value of such institutions as St. James’s Mission, where, in addition to the work of the Church and the school, you have always inculcated upon the natives good morals and habits of steady industry ; so I trust you will be entirely successful in your plans. Mr. Weigall has written to me about a suitable piece of ground, and I hope to be able to reserve it for him.”

It now remains for Churchmen and all well-wishers of our Basuto fellow-subjects to commend in their intercessions to the goodness and mercy of God, and to support with hearty co-operation and timely aid a work for the Master, sketched with some vividness of outline and detail by one who, in spite of weakness and infirmity, has been God’s willing instrument in carrying it on and continuing it.

ALLAN B. WEBB, BISHOP.

DEANERY, SALISBURY,

August 25, 1902.



HAPPY DAYS AND HAPPY WORK IN BASUTOLAND.



CHAPTER I.

AN IMAGINARY TRIP TO MASERU, BASUTOLAND



VERY dear South African friend of mine once said to me something to the following effect—

“The people to write a book are those who are so full of a subject that it is a positive relief to them to put their thoughts upon paper.”

This is in a small degree my condition respecting the native work of our English Church in Maseru, and some very happy days which I have spent there.

I want to tell my little tale, to say my little say, about the Basutos whom I have known.

Nearly thirty years of my long life have been spent in South Africa. I know many of its towns, many of its dear warm-hearted people, many of its natives, and, of course, something of its ways.

Why do I say this? Partly as an apology to the public for writing at all!

When I first went out to South Africa, at the end of 1861, it was in order to keep house for a dear brother, who had an appointment in the Civil Service at Malmesbury in the Western Province.

How well I remember the voyage, although more than forty years ago! There were steamers, of course in those days, but we went in a sailing vessel, and it took us sixty-three days to get from Gravesend to Capetown. We encountered a regular south-easter in "the Bay," all hands had to help, and we were in some danger, through which, however, we were mercifully preserved.

Oh, how different are the conditions now!

Come with me now, dear reader, by a flight of imagination, and let me introduce you to my little home at Maseru.

Let us pack up. You say "All summer clothes, of course!"

"Not so, my friend, not so! Some of the coldest winters that I can remember have been spent in dear healthy Basutoland; aye, and I have seen the peach trees in the mission-garden (standards, of course) weighed down with snow, and our natives have made little fires outside the garden gates whilst waiting for service, 'because their feet were so cold!' So, not all summer clothes, but just what you would wear in English hot weather, and just what you would wear in English cold weather, with plenty of odds and ends, for remember that Basutoland, in spite of our shrewd and thoughtful traders, is after all somewhat of an out-of-the-way part of the world."

Now about our ship. Not a case of sixty-three



BLOEMFONTEIN CATHEDRAL, WITH BISHOP'S LODGE ON THE LEFT.

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days in a sailing vessel, but of from sixteen to about twenty-one in a steamer. Which shall it be, sixteen or twenty-one?

The answer must depend upon £ *s. d.*, and upon our ideas of things in general. If we are pressed for time and *not* for money, let us go by the usual weekly Union and Castle mail-steamer; but if we want to be economical and very comfortable as well, I vote for an intermediate steamer of the same company, and for what we call in Capetown a *G* boat.

I came home last year in one of these—the *Guelph*. I can only say about it “Excellent all round,” and, mind you, I was a second-class passenger, for we poor Church-folk like *first* to save our money, and *secondly* to be comfortable; well, *I did both*.

Off we go! Are you a bad sailor? If so, stay as long as you can on deck; we shall soon be at Madeira.

Every one who has read anything has heard about Madeira and pleasant “Funchal,” with its fruit, and its baskets, and its diving-boys, and its lace (bought at the Convent Grille), and its bullock conveyances. So we will pass that all over, only by all means let us go on shore there if we can.

We may probably touch somewhere else also, but I am not sure where, for it is more than twenty-four years since I *went out* to South Africa in the *Roman*.

Should we stop at St. Helena, we shall think the island very barren—looking from the deck of our steamer—but delightful if we land and drive into the country.

As we near Capetown (the Cabo Tormentoso of

old Bartholomew Diaz) we shall find the sea somewhat rough, and the screw will remind us, by its sound, that its work has become a little heavy. Ah ! but when we once get into Table Bay, and in near sight of Table Mountain, we shall forget all the roughness, and, unless we are very phlegmatic indeed, we shall go into little ecstasies of delight and admiration.

We soon land, and then perhaps you are somewhat astonished ? You had thought that Capetown would be a rough sort of place, behind the world altogether ? Instead of this, you see wide streets, lofty handsome buildings, electric cars. Of course, if you are a lady, you want to buy some little article of dress, and going into a store for that purpose, we are politely asked to go up in the lift to such or such a department.

We hear St. George's Cathedral bell ringing for service ; we reverently enter the sacred edifice, we join in the reverent service, I hope we silently return thanks for our safe voyage, but as we come out, we no longer wonder why his Grace the Archbishop of Capetown is collecting for a new cathedral !

You pause before the monument to that Holy Confessor of the Faith, dear Bishop Gray, and then I take you to have a peep at the Houses of Parliament, and it makes you feel at home to see the statue of our dearly loved Queen Victoria in the enclosure around them.

The train to Bloemfontein leaves somewhere about nine in the evening, so let us go off by the suburban train and see the lovely country about Claremont, Kenilworth, and Wynberg, and perhaps run up to Simonstown as well. We can do it all

and get back to dinner in Capetown (perhaps increasing our luggage by the purchase of a basket or two of fruit) before we are due at the railway-station.

If we are starting on Tuesday night, as is probably the case, we may hope to reach Bloemfontein about four on Thursday afternoon.

Arrived there, your first remark will be, "What a number of people at the station!"

"Always so," I laconically reply.

"Must we go to an hotel?"

"I think not; we shall be pretty sure of a warm welcome somewhere; first, however, all this luggage must go straight to the Maseru post-cart."

(Remember please that I am writing of arrangements as they were made in June, 1901, when I was last at Bloemfontein.)

We ask for our tickets to Maseru; we are startled when for the one day's drive we are charged about £4 each. We inquire how much luggage we may take. The reply is, "Only thirty pounds for each passenger, ladies; the rest must be charged for extra, and go by wagon if there be much of it. Please be ready about five to-morrow morning."

I have known five to be nearer seven; but perhaps, under the British Government, we may say with the French, "*Nous avons changé tout cela.*"

We have our early coffee next morning (a delightful South African institution), and then our heavy vehicle at last rumbles up to the post-office, and we get into our places *somehow*. The last time I entered the post-cart I (after requesting beholders to stand back) crawled in on all fours over the seats and railings. I admit that this was

an exceptional performance, partly owing to the number of mail-bags inside the wagon, and partly owing to my years and want of agility.

We have a "span" of eight horses, or at least of six; our driver has a coloured "boy" at his side, probably a pipe in his mouth, the bugle blows hard enough to awaken the sleeping Bloemfonteiners around, and off we go, not indeed to be "shaken before taken," but to be very distinctly "shaken *whilst* taken."

Persons who are delicate, nervous, or, worst of all, hysterical, should travel by private cart, *if* they can afford to pay for it.

Three hours will bring us to Modder River; we need not fear crossing it, unless there have been recent and heavy rains. Often a child could pick its way over it on the stones, although in rainy seasons it may be very dangerous.

On my first return from Basutoland, to what was then the "Orange Free State," my fellow-passengers and I were separately drawn high across its roaring muddy waters, seated in a small packing case, by means of an apparatus worked by pulleys and dignified by the name of the "aerial tram." I never desire to cross the Modder again in that said tram.

In South Africa we roughly measure distances by "hours," six miles are spoken of as an hour of ordinary Cape cart travelling, therefore three hours more or eighteen miles will bring us to Thaba N'chu, where not long since the Rev. Herbert Crosthwaite, a most earnest missionary, whom I was privileged to know, closed his noble career on earth after having devoted himself to the natives under his care in a most self-sacrificing manner.

At Thaba N'chu our post-cart stops at the post-office, but there is no time for lunch, although we may get possibly a cup of not very good coffee. Not even an outspan here, for there sounds the inexorable bugle and the jolting soon begins again, and gets somewhat worse.

"Only eight hours more of it," we say, with a sigh.

At last we arrive at the Caledon river, the boundary between the Orange River Colony and Basutoland, and we grow cheerful, for a comparatively few minutes will bring us to Maseru. A friend perhaps informs us that the three kopjes or hilltops which we see in front of us are "the world, the flesh, and the devil." Why people call God's beautiful mountains by the name of the Evil one, I cannot think; at our mission I ask our people to call these said hills Faith, Hope, and Charity. We cross the Caledon by the pont or floating bridge, for the Caledon is a river and not merely a periodical torrent, as so many South African rivers really are.

We probably have kind friends awaiting us, if not we go to one of the three boarding houses, in every one of which we are sure of a kindly welcome.

The next morning we awake and remember that we are really *in Basutoland* at Maseru—pray pronounce it *Maseerew* and not *Muzzirew*! A cup of coffee, a walk round, then breakfast.

The children, white and natives, are out with their books and their slates, going some to the high school, some to the French Protestant mission school, some to our own English Church native school, in which we attempt to teach the girls needlework and ironing, as well as the usual subjects to boys and girls alike.

The white children look sweet and nice like those in England, the natives are mostly clothed in a grey or red blanket, with a coloured handkerchief or hat on their heads ; probably a baby brother or sister reposes on the back of some of the girls.

We walk round the village ; first we go to the English Church—some people say that it does not look ecclesiastical ; I hardly know what to say, except that to my eyes it looks very sweet, partly, I own, because of its associations.

Now, indeed, we are blessed with daily services and frequent celebrations of the Holy Communion ; but for many years such things could not be for lack of a clergyman, and one loves the little church partly because of the efforts made for it in the past.

I remember the time when some of the services had to be taken by Government officials ; Sir Marshall Clarke, Sir Godfrey Lagden, Mr. Sloley, all have taken lay services in that church.

The organist has been "any one who could play," the choir has meant "every one who could sing," and so forth. The great Sunday was the monthly day, when a priest came over from St. Barnabas Mission, miles away.

This state of things has given way to regular ministrations ; but I, for one, cannot forget the efforts that were made for us long ago by our British officers.

Next to the church, we notice a little stone house ; it is meant for the resident clergyman. It is not large enough to make any one covetous, and it is neat and nice enough to make it a pleasant abode for one or two clergymen.

Of course we must pay our respects at the Residency, for our Resident Commissioner, subject

to the High Commissioner, is practically our Governor.

As we leave his house, we remark "a nice place and beautiful grounds." The Government Secretary's house is another "nice place." The officers mostly live at the fort, but the Assistant Commissioner and the Doctor have homes in the village. The latter is the chief of the medical staff (a very different kind of individual, remember, to the ordinary English Government doctor), he has one of the nicest houses, and one of the most beautiful gardens in Maseru.

Now for the stores! Please to remember that in South Africa trade is recognized as suitable occupation for a gentleman. Let me take you to a store owned by our mission Treasurer, an excellent friend of ours. What do you need, more finery? Well, you can get it! You can get most things, from a leg of mutton to an evening dress, from a black kettle to a pair of white kid gloves. All we want for daily use is *stored* and provided for us by our thoughtful traders.

There are two other stores besides this one, where we may find pretty well all we need unless we *are* hard to please.

You notice a beautiful expanse of green veldt, some of it parted off by fences of aloes, and you see natives in red blankets flitting about with a number of boys and girls playing merrily near a large plain building distinguished by a neat Latin cross. It is the French Protestant school-chapel, and let me tell you that those native boys and girls could probably beat many an English child in arithmetic, probably in spelling or writing as well.

The French Protestants came to Basutoland in

1833, I think that they have done a grand work in the country, and, above all, to them we owe the translation of the Holy Scriptures into Sesuto.

At last we come to our English native mission. The boys and girls are marching out of the school-room for recreation, and the mission bell (not at all a large one) reminds us by its tinkle that, according to church reckoning, it is the sixth hour (twelve o'clock), and that we with our fellow Christians should pause awhile to kneel at the feet of Him Who "sends the early morning ray, and lights the glow of perfect day."

We enter a poor-looking chapel, and in five minutes we are in the garden again—evidently the prayers in this mission cannot weary by their length.

The children, as they return to school, bow and courtesy to us respectfully (they would be reproved should they omit to do this). Some of the girls now array themselves in flaming red pinafores, and go off to the little "School-of-Work," which is a small laundry at a stone's throw from the chapel.

The little Mission-house looks like a very small farm-house. Pray do not find fault with it, it is my dearly loved little dwelling.

That, the rough chapel and the School-of-Work are all we can boast of at present.

True, but what will you say when I tell you that early in the morning at the sound of the small bell, natives come from some distance and join heartily and reverently in the Mattins of our English Church, and what will you say when I tell you that whereas some nine years ago there was not a single English Church native worshipping here, we have now thirty or more communicants.

With that comforting recollection let me close this chapter.



CHAPTER II.

“OPSTAAN, KOFFIJ DRINK, INSPAN, TREK.” *

BEFORE entering on an account of my permanent sojourn in Basutoland, it may be well for me to say a few words about this beautiful country, which is called the “Switzerland of South Africa.”

Circumstances have obliged me to study its history and geography to a certain extent, but my descriptions will be limited to Maseru and the natives whom I have met there; I leave it to persons of more extensive information to speak of Basutoland and the Basutos in general.

Those who wish to acquaint themselves more closely with this interesting country and people, should procure the paper read last year by Sir Godfrey Lagden, at a meeting in the Royal Colonial Institute. In the Christmas Number of the *Cape Times* for 1901, there were also some excellently written papers on Basutoland, with accompanying photographs, and information can also be gathered from the Educational Manuals in use in the Cape Colony.

* To get up, drink coffee, span in, be off.

I may remark that Basutoland should, properly speaking, be called "The Lesuto"; the language spoken there is "Sesuto;" when we mention the people we should say "Mosuto" for the singular and "Basuto" for the plural; in these pages, however, I purpose, for the sake of my readers, to brave the indignation of good grammarians and to speak in our more familiar way of Basutoland and the Basutos.

A glance at our map of South Africa, the map which has been so constant a study to most of us since 1899, will very easily locate the country. There it lies at the south and south-east of the Orange River Colony, from which it is divided by the Caledon river.

At the eastern side of Basutoland we are separated from Natal by the Drakensburg or Quathlamba mountains. At the south-east we have Griqualand East, and at the south we have the Cape Colony.

The Maluti and Molappo mountains cross the country from north-east to south-west.

What a mountainous little country it is! Yes, the Basutos, you know, are the old "Mountain Bechuanas." They live all around and amongst their mountains, so it is only on special occasions that we can realize what a numerous people they are.

When Lord Milner visited Basutoland some years since, I watched numbers of Basuto horsemen riding past our little Mission-house to meet him!

I was told that there were about sixteen thousand in that cavalcade only; I have just referred to a South African educational book which, printed in 1901, estimates the Basuto



EUROPEAN CHURCH AT MASERU, BASUTOLAND.

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population at two hundred and fifty thousand. There are many more now. Of Europeans there were, I believe, at that time less than six hundred.

When the tribes pursued by that monster Tshaka crossed the Quathlamba mountains and appeared in Basutoland, the wise young chief "Moshesh" incorporated them into his own nation and treated them as his own people.

This accounts for the Fingoes and remains of other tribes settled in the country.

It was after much fighting between Boers and Basutos, and when the latter were distinctly getting the worst of it, that in 1868 Moshesh appealed to the British for protection, which was immediately accorded by Sir Philip Wodehouse.

In 1871, Basutoland was annexed to the Cape Colony, but after the "War of the Guns," the Basutos returned to their more immediate relation to the Empire, and the country is now a British Protectorate and Crown Colony.

Most people know how wisely the Basutos have been protected and guided by Sir Marshall Clarke and Sir Godfrey Lagden! How thankful we should be that, in spite of changes, the same kind of wise, gentle moral force is being brought to bear upon them by our present Resident Commissioner—but pace! I am a woman, and women in my old-fashioned days, if they were generously allowed to *have* an opinion upon politics were certainly not expected to express it!

The Basutos are an essentially agricultural people, and I may say, from personal knowledge, that with them the female sex is not exempt from field labour, for in weeding and ploughing time I find it very difficult to keep our girls in school.

Civil marriages are contracted by means of cattle, and the cattle being once paid, the dark lady becomes the legal wife and property of her *fiancé*. This is the case amongst other tribes also ; a nice Fingo woman told us once that her husband had paid *thirty* cows for her, which was tantamount to insinuating that he thought her "well worth having !"

These cattle marriages, however, are a cause of grief, as I have lately experienced. They create great difficulties in the case of native Christians, and are greatly deprecated by most missionaries.

The Basutos are a hospitable people ; our native Catechist once told me that a Mosuto can travel from one end of Basutoland to the other, without being asked to pay a tickie (3*d.*) for his food and lodging ; they are most dutiful to their fathers ; this I believe to be partly a matter of native law.

When one pays one's native servant say fifteen shillings on the first of the month, his father almost invariably appears and carries off ten shillings or twelve and sixpence, the hired son not in the least objecting.

The Basutos with whom I have had to do are, as a rule, eager for instruction, and are a very self-improving and religiously disposed set of people.

The little details which I have given as to the geography of the country will show how remarkable was our position during the war ; fighting all around us, at Ladybrand, at Rouxville, at Aliwal, in Natal, and at Wepener !

There we were, a handful of Europeans, shut up in a little neutral country amongst thousands of Basutos.

Still, let us remember, that if we were hemmed in by closed borders, we were at the same time preserved from the surrounding turbulence and slaughter.

How safe we have been! thanks first to Almighty God, and under Him to our brave and capable British Resident and officers, and, may I not add, to our many obedient Basutos!

Let me now begin to tell you of my own experiences in Basutoland.

One of the pleasantest invitations I have ever had in all my life was given me at Bloemfontein in 1890, by the wife of the Government Secretary of Basutoland.

To use a colonial expression, I had somewhat "run down," and this lady (who only knew me through a mutual friend) invited me to stay with her at Maseru. I eagerly accepted the invitation.

Only those who have lived at Bloemfontein can estimate what a wonderful change a day's drive to Maseru can make in one's surroundings.

From town to country, from dull weary levels to sweet hills and mountains, from a somewhat monotonous life to English society.

Old as I was, I felt like a child let loose from school, and my spirits rose so high that had not my friends been full of charity, they would have pronounced me most absurd.

I used to take my books early in the morning, and sit on the little hillocks and rocks not far from the house. The natives, in their picturesque red blankets, on their way to the village, would stop with their baskets on their heads and have a look at me. Of course I smiled, and then they would come a little nearer and even peep at my

book and say something in Sesuto which I could not understand. I could not *reply*, but I sometimes made a remark in return, by means of what is known in South Africa as "Kitchen Dutch."

At my kind friends' house there were sweet children, pleasant little fireside gatherings, social evenings, nice English books and magazines to read. Moreover, on Sundays there were the informal services in the little country church, so that I felt sorry as the time approached for this happy visit to come to an end.

It was during the course of it that I heard a remark made which caused me to resolve that I would try and know more of the Basutos.

About the beginning of 1893 an opportunity occurred for my doing so. A friend, who knew of my wish to live in Basutoland, wrote and told me that a teacher was wanted for the white children in the Government aided school at Maseru.

We cannot take up our abode in this part of the world as a mere matter of individual arrangement and choice.

We are supposed to have such a reason for living in the country as shall commend itself as sufficient to the Government authorities. Now my reason was on educational grounds; nothing could be better.

A short interview with our late Bishop (Bishop Hicks of Bloemfontein, whom to know was to revere), and his expressed desire that I should apply for the charge of this school, his cordial sanction given to my attempting any native work that could be done without pain or annoyance to the French Protestants, and my mind was made up.

My application to Government was sent in and kindly received and accepted, every possible help and consideration were given me by the British officials as I started my work. This, indeed, has been the rule, and I have indeed had cause to feel the blessing of living under a "Paternal Government."

I had been working at Bloemfontein amongst the half-castes; the time seemed to have come for resigning my work to the Sisters of SS. Michael and All Angels, with whom, indeed, it had originated.

A very devoted priest, the Rev. H. Oldaker, who was chaplain to the Bishop, had been mainly responsible for the services amongst these people. I had understood something of his worth and had worked most happily under him and the Very Rev. J. R. Vincent, Dean of Bloemfontein. I had even been privileged to teach them a little Dutch.

The progress of Mr. Oldaker was surprising, he soon took Dutch services, and gained the warm affection of his half-caste congregation.

St. Philip's Mission Chapel was opened in the beginning of July, 1893, Mr. Oldaker insisting that the little function should not take place until I could be present at it. At the close of the service I knelt to receive my Bishop's blessing, and immediately after the first Celebration in the Chapel on the following morning there was a hearty hand-shaking with coloured communicants, followed by the departure of a somewhat droll little mission party to the Ladybrand post-cart, *en route* to Maseru, Basutoland.

I was accompanied by Mrs. Emily Taylor (my dear old housekeeper), also by a young lady who

wanted a month's holiday and volunteered to help me during that space of time, and last of all by the dearest friend (of her kind) whom I have ever had ; her name, "Cara," her description, a large red Irish setter.

This last-mentioned friend was, of course, the occasion of some difficulty, as we were about to take our seats in the cart.

Said the clerk, "The dog must not go in ; she must be tied up on the top of the cart."

Said I, "If the dog cannot go, I cannot go."

Matters were getting serious. The clerk discreetly walked away, and a very kind fellow-passenger arranged matters by admitting Cara into the cart.

I took the huge animal on my lap ; the clerk, on his return, acquiesced with a smile ; next, the kind passenger indiscreetly proffered a sandwich to Cara. She approved of this proceeding, and later on, to my shame and confusion, quietly consumed every single one which the poor fellow had provided.

I apologized profusely ; he laughed heartily, and declared that it did not matter a bit.

After all, perhaps the clerk was right. Cara's manners did not warrant her travelling inside.

We spent the night at the Ladybrand Hotel. A "Spider" was sent by a friend next morning to take us on to Maseru, which we reached two hours later, Cara joyfully running beside us and keeping up beautifully with the horses.

Dear reader, if you want to know what South African hospitality is, you should really go to South Africa.

The Government Secretary and his wife (my

Maseru friends aforesaid) received us with all the warmth of such hospitality. They were ready to do every imaginable thing to help us! After a day or two with them, we moved to a cottage close by their house.

It was a funny little place! mud floors, calico ceilings, tiny rooms, two of which were mere "rondavels," or Basuto huts, but a good fruit garden; oh, it was such a happy little home, in spite of its exorbitant rent—£48 per annum.

I remember there was an arbour in the garden, where the Basutos (who called upon us *rather often*) were received. We turned one of the rondavels into a little oratory, and some of them loved to come in whilst we were at prayers.

Our European school, which interested me greatly, was of course our first duty; any work amongst natives had to be done in play-time. The one undertaking helped to support the other, and to me both were delightful.

The Basutos now began following us to the English Church, where they could not understand anything, and where there was not much room for them; therefore, by means of help from kind friends in Capetown, we hired another small house at £18 per annum in the beginning of 1894; this was to be our native school-house. It was, I must confess, a most uninviting abode, but the Basutos did not seem to find it so.

About that time a strange thing happened. I have already said that there are Fingoes in Basutoland; they have a special leaning towards the English, because in 1835, when they were treated as slaves by other tribes, they came to Sir Benjamin d'Urban and asked him to set them free;

this he gladly did, settling some sixteen thousand of them near the Fish River in the Cape Colony.

One day my old housekeeper told me that some twenty Fingoes had called at the Mission-house to see me ; she said that they wanted me to teach them about God and about heaven ! Nothing more !

My heart warmed with delight at receiving such a request ; I felt thankful beyond expression. I need hardly say that the reply I made was favourable and in glowing terms.

Before beginning work at the little Mission-house I had been joined by a lady from Pretoria, to whom I shall always allude as "Sister."

As Cara beheld "Sister" she understood the familiar cap and cross, and instead of barking, she put her huge paws lovingly on the lady's shoulders, showing by this special welcome what a very discriminating doggie she was.

Things went well with us until early in June, when we heard some rather startling news.

Six of our best paying pupils were going to leave Maseru for Buluwayo ! Now the "White School," as we called it, although a private venture, was generously subsidised by the Basutoland Government, and our children paid us regularly, not only for their schooling, but for the music lessons which I gave them.

On the other hand, we had our heavy rent to pay, and there were three or four of us to be kept, besides our native servants. Added to this, £ *s. d.* were very scarce with us, or as a dear child whom I knew once said, "Money was very dear !" I had learned to have a great horror of debt, and now either debt or retrenchment was staring us in the face.

What *was* there to retrench, except in the one item of house-rent?

I went about, perhaps rather sadly, looking for a cheaper house, but none could be obtained; so there remained nothing to be done save to occupy the native Mission-house ourselves, and the thought of this was not wholly pleasant.

What would Sister and the teacher say?

I need not have troubled myself. Sister rose nobly to the occasion, cheered me, and encouraged me to carry out my resolution.

The Rev. Spencer Weigall (formerly of the Universities Mission), who was Director of the St. Barnabas Mission Masite, became also vicar of Maseru about this time; he at once helped and cared for us. We owe him more than I can say; but on this point I am ordered to be strictly silent. I shall refer to him as "the Director." We had thoroughly cleaned the objectionable house—we had even ornamented its windows with small blue blankets, and great was my pleasure when Mr. Weigall, instead of condoling with us on our reduced estate, began to admire our new abode and to tell us how wonderfully we had improved it.

The first Sunday after our move, the Basutos appeared in great force, no less than seventy men women and children, to be taught in the tiny house!

Now we had but one little sitting-room, which I will call the "Everything room." There were also two bedrooms, one of which was sub-divided, whilst the other was very small.

Sister, to whom I had rashly committed the said sub-division, took as *her* share a portion of such tiny dimensions that I sometimes likened her

room to a large cupboard ; however, she professed herself to be *quite* contented.

She had retired for a short time to her spacious apartment when I broke to her the tidings of our seventy pupils ; she greatly preferred teaching whites to teaching natives, but she at once expressed her willingness to help.

Forty people were packed into the "Everything room," and thirty children were consigned to the kitchen. Sister undertook the latter, and when the dirty little things crowded around her, said very politely : "Not *quite* so close, my dears ; not *quite* so close."

We treated this day's experience as a joke ; but I could not, of course, make my fellow-workers uncomfortable *every* Sunday, so we called together our natives and harangued them in the garden.

I told them how we were circumstanced, how sorry we were that it was impossible for us to continue services in the house. I asked them whether they really *did* wish for the ministrations of our church amongst them, and told them that I must test their sincerity by asking them to assemble for prayers in the garden, bravely ignoring the cold (it was July, South African winter). I promised that if they persevered in this way, I would try and collect a little money in order to build them a small school-chapel.

Their answer was very satisfactory. "Yes, they *did* want us to teach them, they would not mind the cold, they would persevere."

Then I pointed out that seats at least would now be plentiful, as "Mother Earth" would supply them to any extent and gratuitously.

They soon fixed up a church bell ; one native

found the rusty oven-door of an old stove, another happy individual picked up part of a poker! The piece of iron was fixed to a tree, and when hammered by the poker, a very satisfactory "clang" was produced.

There lived a blacksmith opposite, who hammered at times on his anvil; we had no week-services at that time, otherwise there *might* have been some doubt as to which was the church bell, and which the blacksmith's anvil!

A Fingo, who had had some education and testing, began now to hold regular services; his name was Richard n'Dobe, a name which he has endeared to us by years of persevering work.

As soon as I could be spared from the "white school," I made a sort of collecting raid into the Grahamstown diocese. There are far more English people in this diocese than in ours of Bloemfontein, and they have much more to spare in the way of money; nothing could, however, be done without episcopal sanction.

Bishop Webb, whom I knew very well, was so good as to give his permission, although I had appeared in his diocese first, and asked it afterwards. Mother Cecile, of the Grahamstown "Community of the Resurrection," in the most large-hearted and generous spirit, encouraged me in my undertaking, declaring that nothing done for the *church* could injure her sisterhood.

Finally I brought home some £50 or so, of which, however, a considerable part was raised in Jagersfontein (in our own diocese) by the kind permission of the Rev. J. Thorne. It was partly on this account that our little chapel was called "St. James's Native Chapel."

It was at once erected as a lean-to on our cottage, and on St. Stephen's Day, 26th December, 1894, it was dedicated by Mr. Weigall.

I may just mention that as no titles to property are granted in Basutoland, churches cannot be consecrated. To quote from Sir Godfrey Lagden's paper, to which I have already alluded—

“The soil is held for the people on communal tenure by the Paramount Chief, and again held in trust for him by the Government, that is to say, the Paramount Chief retains the power to apportion ground for tribal use, but neither he nor his retainers can alienate for any purpose, nor is title granted. Any portions required by Government, missions, trading stations, and such like are *loaned*, and if occupation for any reason ceases, they return to the trustees.”

I had hired the Mission-house on a three years' lease, with option of purchase for £100 within the expiry of the said term, so that the adding of a School-Chapel to it, was not so unwise as at first it may appear to have been.

Great, indeed, was the joy of the natives as they marched into their little chapel singing a hymn which, in Sesuto, corresponds to our “Pleasant are Thy Courts.” One of the kind missionaries from the Modderpoort Brotherhood, the Rev. J. T. Carmichael, came over for the occasion, and sent the native Ladybrand choir of St. Mary's to us to lead the singing.

Of course there was a little feasting in the afternoon, and I cannot forbear telling you about a certain Basuto pudding, contributed by a connection of one of the chiefs. It was made of mealie meal, and was so fearfully hard that I

vehemently exhorted my fellow-workers not to touch it.

It has always been a comfort to me to reflect that (as far as I know) no one died from eating that pudding! *I* compared it to a football, but a better instructed friend of mine (who has had more to do with the male sex than I have) has condemned my ignorance, in fact, has hinted that I know nothing about it! saying that a football being hollow inside, a terrestrial globe, the usual schoolroom ornament, would afford a far better comparison.





CHAPTER III.

SOME BASUTO FRIENDS.

WE have already taken an imaginary trip to Maseru, in Basutoland ; now let me introduce you to some dear Basuto friends. In what I am about to say, please, however, remember that I am speaking of Maseru natives whom I *do* know, and not of raw natives whom I do *not* know !

Whilst a few of our people affect European dress (which we do not wholly encourage), the generality are clothed in large red or yellow blankets or rugs ; the blanket is fastened on the shoulder by a huge safety-pin, as long as one's finger.

Their hair generally grows in little tufts, and always reminds me of the shrubs growing separately upon our South African mountains.

Round their heads they tie a piece of coloured stuff ; if that be not forthcoming they will sometimes adorn themselves with a wreath of green leaves.

Babies generally travel on the willing back of a mother or sister, and we are often asked for a piece of bread to give to the baby !

The men generally wear blankets also, although



FRONT OF ST. JAMES'S NATIVE MISSION HOUSE. MASERU NATIVE WOMEN IN TURBANS
HAD JUST BEEN BAPTIZED.

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some of them appear in common coats and trousers. Native men-servants are always called "boys," however old they may be. A man of eighty would be probably called a poor *old* "boy."

The rougher class of men who dress in blankets are known to Europeans as "blanket boys," and the wage of a blanket boy is from seven and sixpence to ten shillings a month.

And now about their names, the names by which they call themselves, and the names by which they call *us*.

Most natives whom I have known, are fond of peculiar names, adopting them, I think from their sound or the facility of pronouncing them, rather than from their meaning.

At one time, when working at the Kimberley Hospital, I was allowed by the Sister-in-charge, amongst other little duties, to say prayers in the native wards before the inmates went to sleep for the night.

It was amusing to see at the heads of the beds the names "Sugar," "Corn," "Rice," "Shilling," "Sixpenny," "Piccaninni." The man-servant of one lady whom I had the pleasure of meeting in Capetown, called himself "Pea-soup!"

To English and unaccustomed ears the order, "Pea-soup, bring round the carriage," would be something very new and amusing.

Natives also love Bible names, and are frequently called Adam, Elijah, and so forth. I have asked our people to select their names from the New Testament, and, therefore, our Catechumens are often baptized as Nerea, Phœbe, Julia, etc.

But if the Basutos are peculiar in the choice of their *own* names, they are *very* peculiar as to the

names which they bestow upon us, and that to every rank in society.

I hope it is no breach of respect or confidence to inform you that Sir Godfrey Lagden himself was called amongst the Basutos "Romelbant," or the father of belts, because he often wore a Norfolk jacket.

The present Resident Commissioner is "the father of snow," because it was snowing when he first arrived at Maseru.

There was no reason why we at the Mission-house should be excepted from the prevailing rule. One of us was dubbed "the mother of fire," another, being somewhat stout, was (a little to her disgust) called "the mother of fat." I was seriously anxious lest one of my many failings should be indelibly stamped upon public memory by my being called the mother of that special fault. *As far as I know*, however, they have been unusually merciful to me, and my name is nothing more than "Mè," or mother.

Polygamy, as we know, is *the* most grievous difficulty with which the missionary has to deal in Basutoland. We only baptize the *head*-wife, and my heart has often ached at having to damp the hopes of the inferior wives who have eagerly desired to become Christians.

This subject is, however, so entirely beyond me, and beyond the province of this simple record, that I can do no more than just *name* it.

When I first went to Maseru, I had not realized the state of things in this direction, and was surprised when, one day, a tall, handsome Mosuto told me proudly that he was a son of Moshesh by his thirteenth wife. Evidently my friend thought

that he was *very high up* on the list, and so, indeed, he is, if we remember that Moshesh had one hundred and thirty wives.

Another native friend, who proposed taking me to his kraal for safety in case of fighting at Maseru, was said to be surrounded by no less than seventy native ladies; I need hardly remark that the proposed visit was not paid.

I have described my Basuto friends, now let me keep my promise by introducing some of them to you, dear reader, trusting that you are not yet wearied out by my many remarks.

You will readily understand, that although the persons are real, one or more of the names used must be necessarily fictitious.

First, let us talk about Mahlatsa, our washer-woman. She is the widow of a Mosuto. We make a great deal of our Christian festivals at our mission, and after spending a Christmas with us, she came to me and said—

“Oh, Deaconess, Christmas is *so* beautiful, and the Lord is *so* beautiful.”

After being a hearer for three or four months, and a Catechumen for a year, Mahlatsa's hopes were crowned, and she was baptized. She was very enthusiastic.

Pray remember that I am not describing perfected saints but struggling sinners, and naturally the temptations of those who have just emerged from savagedom are not of a very refined character.

Dear Mahlatsa's temptation was to partake at times a little too freely of Leting. Now Leting (which is a sour drink) is made from Kaffir corn, which is the food of the country. It is not an

objectionable drink at all, and the use of it cannot be proscribed.

On one occasion Mahlatsa was supposed to have taken too much of it, for she had danced about somewhat foolishly in the street.

She was had up, of course, before the Director, who kindly but seriously rebuked her.

"No, Moruti," she replied, "I was *not* dancing, I was feeling very happy, and I was only singing with my feet."

Turning to me, the Director said, quite quietly, "Sister, if you find that Mahlatsa *sings any more with her feet*, she is not to be confirmed."

Afterwards I talked to her.

"You see, my child," I said, "you must either give up the *Leting*, or give up your confirmation."

"Oh," she said, "I will not lose my confirmation, I will give up the *Leting*."

And so she did most bravely. I think I have never met with a more sincere, simple Christian woman than Mahlatsa.

On one occasion, during my absence from home, the Mission-house nearly caught fire, and down she fell on her knees, praying, "Oh! Modimo, save Deaconess' house."

She takes all her teaching very literally. She is ready at a moment's notice to give away her dinner or her clothes, she is ready to work for any one, to help any one, and she speaks her mind thoroughly to any whom she believes to be doing wrong.

Once I told our people that our native Christians should themselves do what they could for the sick (who often live miles away from us). I

suggested that they should read a hymn to them, or say a prayer from their little book.

One morning Mahlatsa came to us very late. She said—

“I could not help it. I was up at five o'clock; but I have been out visiting the sick.”

I am afraid I replied, “Do not please visit *me* at five o'clock in the morning if I am sick.”

Dear old Mahlatsa! devout, hard-working, rough, but oh, so faithful and unselfish and affectionate. Would that we all received the faith in her child-like spirit, and acted up to our convictions, as she has done!

It is easier to me to write about “Johnnie,” for some reasons, than about Mahlatsa.

Johnnie, when he came to us, was a blanket boy. He had not been very long at the Mission-house before (indiscreetly adopting language which he had picked up from some low whites) he informed my housekeeper that she was a *pig*, and a short time after, that she was a *fool*.

It is not to be wondered at that she came to me in a state of considerable indignation. Of course I calmed her down, by reminding her that the boy did not understand English.

To show how rough Johnnie was, I may tell you that on one occasion, my housekeeper being away for a holiday, Johnnie and I were left alone in the house. I became very poorly and retired to my bedroom.

“Johnnie,” I said, “Missis is very sick; Johnnie must be good to Missis and bring her some tea.”

I remained for a long time in the dark, and at length Johnnie arrived!

He offered to place a tea-pot full of scalding tea

in one of my hands, and a whole loaf on a black tray beside me.

"No, no, Johnnie," I said, "you must get a cup and plate and knife, and some milk and butter. See," I added, "here are my keys. Now, Johnnie, you are in charge, you must take care of Missis and the house."

When Johnnie reappeared, he made me feel better by sending me into a fit of laughing.

He had noticed that I wore my keys hanging from my girdle, and he had hung them dangling at *his* side!

He was a most imitative individual. Our Director says that the Basutos are all so, as a rule, and we have therefore to be very careful as to any outward expression of faith which we teach them, lest they take it up as mere mimicry. This was the case once or more, I am sorry to say, with Johnnie.

He was only a hearer, and had had very little teaching, when my housekeeper came to me, much pleased, to say that Johnnie was kneeling in the chapel before the altar saying his prayers.

I was not as delighted as she was, for I, knowing how ignorant he was, suspected something wrong.

There the boy was, sure enough, on his knees with a book in his hand. I was not surprised at his praying, but the book puzzled me, because he could not read!

I looked at it; he was studying an account of "Little Henry" in a school reader.

At last poor Johnnie had to be dismissed. In a time of drought, he refused to fetch water from the Caledon, which runs not far from our house.

I told him that if he would not obey me, he must go.

Not very long after he wished to return, and he deceived his new mistress as well as me in order to do so ; at that time he was under instruction for Holy Baptism, which made matters serious.

His mistress was naturally indignant, but kindly consented to have matters quietly arranged. Johnnie was ordered by the Director to refund more than a months' wages to her, and his baptism was postponed for a year.

When he was talked to about it, he said, "I am sorry I did tell that 'loy,' but I did not know it was so wicked to tell a 'loy'!"

This little confidence was made to the house-keeper, who repeated it to me.

Only one more anecdote about him!

One day he brought me a dirty paper to sign, a promise to pay £2 or so for him at a given date, to the keeper of a native store.

I promptly and very emphatically declined, and inquired why he asked such a thing, when he had good wages, regularly paid.

"I want to buy a horse," he said.

"What could you do with it?" I asked.

He at last said, in a coaxing way, with a smile, "I want to be like the white men, I want to get into debt!"

As natives cannot be sued in Basutoland for debt, he probably meant that he wanted to have credit like the white men.

How affectionate and thoughtfully kind some of our people are, would scarcely be supposed.

Rasébolélo (now I am thankful to say owning a Christian name) is a gaunt tall old man, living at more than a mile's distance from our chapel; he comes often two or three times a day to us for

prayers or instruction. He owns a few fowls, and, of course, at times a few eggs. Several times he has brought us eggs, and once when I was not well, he arrived with a chicken, saying that he thought it would be good for me. He has done the same thing when I have been about to travel.

Before I left Maseru last year for my visit home, our dear people, who are nearly all poor and some very poor, presented me, not with a purse, but with a piece of paper, in which they had wrapped up twenty-three shillings and fourpence, that I might buy myself a little present from them.

Our Basutos are taught that the knowledge of Christ is a treasure above all treasures, and that it is the most shameful selfishness to keep such knowledge to ourselves! They are taught to draw others to that Blessed Light which has shone upon their own hearts, and which is indeed "to lighten the Gentiles."

The missionary spirit is, thank God, already evidenced among them.

One of our people, whom I will call "Miriam," is deeply imbued with it.

Miriam lives at a considerable distance from our School-Chapel, which, however, she regularly attends; not content with this, she gathers the natives around her every morning to her hut, and there, I believe, she repeats with them the simple form of daily prayers which our people learn from us, and which is printed in their little catechism books.

Miriam is constantly bringing people to be introduced to us, or to be received as Catechumens. She is very much looked up to amongst our mission-folk; her great wish is to have a little

bell wherewith to call her neighbours together, and almost the last thing she said to me before I left Maseru was to ask me to bring her back a tinging-ting.*

I cannot help mentioning the case of another native, or rather coloured woman, who does not live in Basutoland.

In the course of my collecting expeditions I arrived, some years ago, at Ceres, in the Cape Colony, and was kindly invited by the rector to visit a little mission at a place called Prince Alfred's Hamlet.

It was far off, but I took my magic lantern, Scripture slides, etc., and gave a little entertainment to the natives.

I found "Leah" doing work closely resembling that of a deaconess or servant of the church; she lived close to the rough tenement used as a School-Chapel.

Leah prepared the school-room for service; Leah looked up the children for school; Leah rang the church bell, and Leah seemed to do pretty well everything in a small way.

On my arrival she even mothered *me*, for she brought me a little tray covered with a clean white cloth and provided with delicious tea and bread and butter, for which I was not allowed to pay her a farthing.

After the little entertainment was over, I drove back to Ceres, a distance of, I believe, some twelve miles; arrived there at about ten o'clock in the evening, and remembering that I had to leave by

* This bell has since been lovingly provided by means of shilling subscriptions paid in England to an invalid collector, by some whose hearts were very large and their means very small.

post-cart early the following morning, I began to prepare my luggage, and required a loose key, which I used to keep in my purse.

No purse was to be found! I remembered that after locking the lantern-box, I must have put the key back into the purse whilst standing at a table surrounded by rough natives, who were simply crowding around me.

I am a sadly absent-minded person (it is a wonder that the Basutos do not call me the "Mother of forgetfulness"), and I concluded that I must have laid the purse down on the table, neglecting to put it into my pocket.

What was to be done? I could but keep quiet and ask God to help me. Very early next morning I went out, and after considerable difficulty, I engaged a cart for seven shillings and sixpence to take me back to Prince Alfred's Hamlet.

We had hardly driven more than a street's length, when I descried a native woman running towards us, flourishing something red in her hand.

The poor rough natives had not touched my purse, which they might so easily have annexed in the crowd. Leah had found it, and sent this woman to Ceres with it about midnight.

She, poor thing, had come alone on foot, all in the dark and along the solitary country road, and when she arrived, about seven in the morning, she did not seem to think that she had done anything but what was to be expected.

If any one be inclined to think that natives are no better for Christianity and incurably lazy, I should like such an one to know Leah of Prince Alfred's Hamlet, near Ceres.



CHAPTER IV.

WORKING WITH OUR HANDS.

IF the work done at Maseru were *my* work, these pages could not appear; but as a well-known clergyman in King Williamstown once said, "It has grown up out of nothing!"

It is "*God's work*" and His only, from beginning to end, and therefore I write about it with perfect ease. Of course we recognize all work as God's work (marred by our own faults and imperfections), still one realizes the fact more clearly when work grows, and is wonderfully blessed, although fostered by those who, comparatively speaking, have nothing and are nobody.

The mission was so very poor that our church furniture was only just "decent," and of the very cheapest description; neither had we any money wherewith to pay the Catechist.

The Bishop sent him his licence, and we managed to buy him a cassock and surplice, but I had to tell him that we could not afford to pay him, and that I could not say when I might be able to do so.

"All right, Deaconess," was the cheerful reply,

and for about two years he worked uncomplainingly if somewhat irregularly.

During that time he received nothing but four shillings, with which I was obliged to supply him for food, etc.

The fact is, that all that could be got together was being hoarded up for the purchase of the Mission-house within the specified three years.

In 1896, I went once more to the kind and liberal merchants at Port Elizabeth, and they made me glad by a gift of over £60; I had saved up £40, and so we had £100, which, with intense delight, was handed over for the purchase of Rose Cottage, in the name of the Bishop of Bloemfontein.

Our Maseru Treasurer, George R. Hobson, Esq., was greatly amused when I told him that the landlord of Rose Cottage had himself subscribed towards the purchase-money.

How generous and good all the merchants and people of South Africa have been to us I can scarcely express. They not only give, but they give so kindly.

Once every two years I have appeared in most of the large towns, managing, however, to collect *somewhere* every six months, but avoiding *frequent* visits to any one.

People have *pitied* me for these collecting tours; they ought rather to have *congratulated me*.*

* I may here remark, that whilst travelling in South Africa, I have realized, as I never did before, how great is the influence for good of the Home-School (I mean the boarding-school conducted by the Sisters of St. Michael's Home, Bloemfontein. Wherever I have met with "an old home girl" I have found a warm friend, and in her home a little centre of church feeling and of refinement,



SIR GODFREY LAGDEN AND OFFICERS.

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Very few ladies in South Africa can afford to go to the seaside or elsewhere every six months. Duty has justified me in doing this, indeed it has *obliged* me to do it; every fresh visit has been in many ways a fresh pleasure, and has added fresh friends to my list, and therefore fresh warmth to my heart.

At times, indeed, we have been short of money, and this may account for my having had recourse to the help of a magic lantern,* with its Scripture slides, cathedrals, and, I am afraid, comic slides also.

One little Dutch boy declared that all the English cathedrals put together did not come up to the Dutch church at Rouxville! What refreshing ignorance, and how we laughed at him over and over again.

Under the Rev. S. Weigall's care, and with the help of our catechist, the evangelization of the natives has proceeded steadily, and, of course, on church lines; it was some time, however, before we had baptisms.

In reading these pages it must of course be remembered that I am not for an instant wishing to ignore other missions, although it is impossible for me to give an account of any work except that under immediate consideration.

Still, I should be ungrateful indeed if I failed to mention the deep and kindly interest which the English Church Brotherhood at Modderpoort has taken in our small endeavours. Personal

* I have a private and amusing reason for remarking that the lantern is *very heavy*, and could not be carried under my arm; also that the collecting bag (I own it is an abnormally large one) travelled, as a rule, inside my handbag.

encouragement, kind and thoughtful gifts, a personal ministration when needed, and, above all, the intercessions of the community, all this has been granted to us, and for all my gratitude is very great.

In fact, blessings have indeed been poured upon us, and as an old Servant of the Church I can say that such service is joyful and blessed indeed, save when marred or saddened by one's own shortcomings and faults.

For a long time the European School had such great claims upon my time that little or nothing was done *by us* for the education of the native children.

When, however, the doctor emphatically protested against my continuing the European work, I naturally turned my thoughts to the subject of native secular education, all the more, perhaps, that our subscribers were impressing upon me that I ought to teach the natives to *work with their hands*.

The idea at once commended itself to my judgment, and I felt anxious to act upon it by setting up a little "School-of-Work" in which our girls should be taught ironing to begin with.

The director most gladly consented to my proposed undertaking, Lady Lagden, whom I consulted, was warm in her approval, telling me that Sir Godfrey was most keenly in favour of Industrial training for the Basutos.

Another valued friend, Mrs. Mabile, of Morija said that the sort of little undertaking which I contemplated would be a boon to the Maseru girls.

We began with a little ironing class of six girls,

under the excellent teaching of our Catechist's wife; but, alas! the work had to be carried on in the "Everything room" aforesaid.

Now to this there were insuperable objections, and so it came to pass that, after a little more collecting, a neat little laundry was built within the mission compound.

I *love* that little laundry, which we call the "School-of-Work;" but it is the toughest piece of foreign mission work which I have ever been called to do.

Lady Lagden opened it herself, uttering for the first time a few well-spoken words in public, and there was a loyal, though feeble and somewhat screechy, effort at "God save the Queen" as she left us.

Our native day school was continued, but it has ever been my wish to recruit from the heathen and not to interfere with other people's work.

With the full consent of the Director, deserters from the French mission were not welcomed, nor even, as a rule, allowed to remain.

No girls are admitted to our school unless they are willing to learn sewing and ironing as well as the usual subjects.

Before I left—30th May, 1901—for England, our little laundry, in which of course women were employed, was bringing us in about £40 per annum.

My great wish is that the School-of-Work may develop into a good technical school for laundry-work, dressmaking, and cookery.

At Grahamstown, where, not without some amusement, the kind Sisters of St. Peter's Home received me as a laundry pupil, and tried hard to

teach me (at sixty-six years of age) all that I was capable of learning, the Sisters' technical school is very good.

Several of them hold certificates from the Liverpool Technical School, established by Miss Calder; many ladies have come to them for teaching.

As I am now touching upon the subject of education, and specially of the education of natives, I should like to mention very modestly the conclusions at which I have arrived after having been taught by some little experience, after having learned from others, and after having my ideas corrected by some failure.

Collecting, as I have done, in Capetown, Port Elizabeth, Queenstown, East London, Johannesburg, and Pretoria, and mixing (as my Deaconess vocation permits me to do) pretty freely with people in general, I am, of course, familiar with the remarks which are often made (sometimes in a kind and friendly spirit) about natives. I have been told that they are *lazy, bad servants, and all the worse for teaching*.

Now I do not wish to write with an enthusiasm which ignores the primary duty of truthfulness.

First, then, as to *laziness*.

I cannot wholly deny the fact. They *are*, very often, terribly inert, and must be terribly irritating to business men.

On the other hand, I cannot endorse such a statement in an *unqualified* manner.

Look, for instance, at the extraordinarily long distances which are often traversed on foot, at a quiet, regular pace, by native women and children, as well as by men! In spite of their

hot climate they fearlessly encounter fatigue from which we northerners should shrink.

Look, again, at the native at his books ; he will sit gladly at his studies for hours. Surely we can no more call such an one "lazy" than we could apply the word to any English student who may read hard but seldom walk abroad ?

Our Basutos will come miles to attend our School-Chapel, and some of our native servants work hard and uncomplainingly in a way which I should scruple to require from an English servant ; they retire early to their huts at night, but they come to us early the following morning.

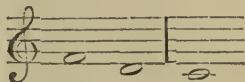
Granted, however, for the sake of argument, that most natives are disinclined for exertion, can we wonder at it ?

Born in a hot climate ; descended from inert parents ; left for years of infancy and childhood to do nothing but *sit in the sun*, without any special interest to arouse them ; living in a condition of monotonous ignorance, is it wonderful, after all, that a native inclines, under ordinary circumstances, to a passive life ?

Mark the qualification, *under ordinary circumstances*.

At one time a number of Basutos were, during the Boer War, quartered in a kraal next door to our Mission-house. They were on their way to Bloemfontein, where they were to repair the railways.

About dawn they awoke us singing the notes,



to the syllables "Hoo, Hoo, Hoo," their war-song, or at any rate *a* war-song of theirs.

This went on until nine in the evening, varied by war-dances, leaps over the wall to get at our pump, which they usually left running, and occasional visits to our mission chapel.

Oh! that they had been a little more "inert!"

As "Counsel for the defence," I find the servant question a knotty point to deal with.

Dearly as I love my dark friends I am not a blinded enthusiast.

I believe, however, that a good mistress will generally find good servants.

The Dutch have, as we know, the character of being harsh in their treatment of natives, yet some mistresses amongst them train and mother their native servants in a wonderful way, teaching mere children to cook, wash, iron, and even wait at table remarkably well.

It is perhaps in the teaching and training that we British often fail. We leave our native servants too much to themselves. The hired native woman must not be supposed to understand her duties as cook or housemaid as a matter of course. She must be *taught* in a way that would never be contemplated by the ordinary English lady. If she be left to herself, the native maid is pretty sure to come to grief.

At one time we had at the Mission-house a most respectable, clean Fingo woman as a general servant. When she had laid the cloth, it gave one the impression that she had *sprinkled* the things broadcast on the table.

On being spoken to, she replied, "I *cannot* lay the table properly, as my brother and I have always eaten out of a pot."

Then as to morality! A mistress who engages a native woman must remember that she has to be *personally responsible for her in every way*.

She must not only teach and guide, but she must shield and *protect* her maid, for our native women are, I grieve to say, beset by dangers from which an experienced and careful mistress can, under God, best defend them.

The native woman-servant must be befriended, watched, and closely cared for, night and day, by her English mistress.

Are they such bad servants after all?

Let a good English mistress bear her testimony.

Not long since, one such said to me in England, "What would I not give to have my Basuto servants with me!"

But, again, people say sometimes, "Natives are the worse for teaching; give me the raw material!"

To this I reply by another question: "To what sort of teaching do you allude?"

The native who has merely undergone a course of book-learning is sure to be a conceited man, and will probably become a *dangerous* one. Book-learning, pure and simple and unmixed, I believe to be a curse to the native rather than a blessing, a preparation moreover for war and bloodshed in days to come.

A native man-servant at Bloemfontein once asked a friend of mine for permission to go and see me about teaching a class in my night-school.

On his return, my friend said, "Well, and what did Sister M—— want with you?"

He replied, "She wanted to delineate my features!"

I could only delineate one special feature which I told her was gross self-conceit.

It is not to be wondered at if pretentious and so-called "educated natives," of this character disgust our Colonists.

Beset by difficulties and dangers as we are, how are we *really* to help our South African native brethren; how really must we teach them?

From the very depths of my heart I reply fearlessly, in spite of all that may be advanced to the contrary, "We must help them by imparting to them Christian education."

What do I mean by Christian education?

I mean the threefold Christian training of the threefold man.

The native's body should be trained until his physical energy shall increase; his mind should be instructed by technical teaching as well as by school lore, and, above all, his spirit should be enlightened by God's truth in Christ.

There is for the native as well as for the white man, but One Healer; there is but One Light for him, the Light of the World; there is but One Guide, the Blessed Spirit of God.

I feel, however, very strongly that we must show our people the practical side of Christianity. We must of course read the Holy Scriptures to them, and pray with them, but we must also take the spade, or the iron, or the needle, into our own hands, and teach them, by our own example, the "dignity of labour."

Some of our people once said they did not mind working as *we* did it.

Our own motto for our natives is Evangelization and Labour.

They are often told to remember that if they neglect their work on the six days they break the fourth Commandment just as much as if they worked unnecessarily on the seventh.





CHAPTER V.

A SAINTLY BISHOP.

THE year 1899 was *the* sad time occurring amongst the happy years which I am chronicling.

Still, even then, though sorrowing we had much occasion for rejoicing and thankfulness.

Our School-Chapel was enlarged and could hold a hundred and fifty people, the work was increasing, all was going well, when we heard the first mutterings of the coming storm of war.

Newspapers were making wise predictions, some of which have been strangely verified ; then, just as unrest was at its height, and expectation keenly alive, Bishop Hicks came to Maseru, and we soon had reason to know that he came to us *ill*.

On Friday, 15th September, he confirmed, I think, eleven of our natives in the just enlarged chapel ; he was kind as ever, but *not himself* ; he tried, before he left, to make a little joke, but perhaps it fell on one's ear somewhat sadly.

That same morning he went to Masite, where he confirmed again on the following Sunday, and on the Tuesday evening I saw him (for the last time)

kneeling at evensong within the sanctuary of the European Church.

Dear, holy Bishop Hicks ! To know him was to revere him !

That very evening the first sad news was spread. There was to have been a "conversazione" in honour of him, people were just going to it when the Rev. Alfred Lewis, with whom he was staying, gave notice that the entertainment could not take place, the Bishop was too ill !

After another week, the illness being dangerous, the doctor thought it necessary to have him under his immediate and constant supervision, and removed him to his own house.

We have indeed cause to be grateful to Doctor Long for his most devoted and unselfish care of him, as well as to all the other friends who ministered in any way to his comfort ; but his home was not to be any longer in this troublous world, but in the blessed mansions on high, for after nearly a month of prayer, of patience, of resignation, of solemn and brave preparation for death, our Bishop fell asleep in Jesus.

The Bloemfontein Sisters are good and kind nurses, as most people know, or might know ; one of them who had been sent by the Mother to nurse him, had only been about half an hour on duty when, after saying his evening prayers and reading for a short time, he remarked that he felt tired and should like to go to sleep.

A few minutes later and "the righteous man" was taken from the evil to come," and our Bishop awoke amongst the blessed ones in Paradise !

His remains were taken to the church the evening following that of his death.

We, of the congregation, watched there in turns through the night, then early on the morning of Friday, 13th October, we took him to his humble resting-place in Maseru cemetery.

Every one in the village went to the funeral ; but owing to the coming war, none of the Bloemfontein clergy could attend it.

There were therefore present only the Rural Dean of Basutoland (our Director, the Rev. Spencer Weigall), the Rev. Alfred Lewis and the Rev. Joseph Deacon from Tsikoane.

The natives followed the procession in a very orderly manner, headed by their Catechist, who carried a little wooden processional cross, which had lately been bought.

After the service was over at the grave, and when the Europeans were returning, the natives remained, by special permission, to sing hymns until all was reverently closed in.

Some time later, they went to the grave again in procession, singing on their way, and, kneeling down, each laid two or three flowers on the resting-place of their late father-in-Christ.

If the Bishop loved the natives, as we know that he did, the latter were very ready to respond to his love.

I remember how one day, long ago, he appeared at a quiet early celebration in the Mission-Chapel, attired in cope and mitre. Some one wondered at this ! I knew all about it, for I had told him that our natives would be disappointed at not seeing him, as they had hoped to do, in full Episcopal vestments.

As we returned from the cemetery we were accosted with—



THE ROOM IN WHICH BISHOP HICKS DIED.

[Page 56.]

"Have you heard? Only think! The Caledon border is closed! War is declared; and soon the Aliwal border will be closed also!"

What a weary time; but oh! what a safe time, thank God, was to follow!

I cannot say that I was as restful as I should have been. Once, when feeling anxious, I met Sir Godfrey Lagden on horseback, with one of his officers. Knowing him well, I ventured to stop him.

"Shall we go away?" I asked. "Shall I send my little teacher away?"

The answer was very quiet: "Do nothing at all, the Boers are not coming to Maseru."

Had we no trials of any kind? Yes, we had. The first was the fact that all our money supplies stopped and there was no possibility of collecting.

Somewhat sad, though not despairing, I went to our treasurer, Mr. Hobson.

"What am I to do?" I asked.

The same answer: "Do nothing at all, you will be all right. We will look after you."

Mr. Lewis, the resident clergyman, kindly offered help, which we declined.

Then he generously gave us all the collections of one Sunday, and that Sunday the offerings beat the record.

They soon knew the difficulty at the Residency.

There to *know* meant to help, and by God's goodness, Sir Godfrey soon got us out of our straits.

Is it wonderful that I speak warmly of Maseru and Maseru people?

At the end of a year or so the delayed funds began to come in again, and that time of

apprehension proved to be (collections of course excepted) an unusually good financial year.

Is it wonderful that I believe in *trusting* rather than in groaning and fretting?

The prices of provisions rose, of course, and some needful articles became scarce, for they had to be conveyed to Basutoland in wagons, of which the Boers liked to annex the contents.

Indeed, they showed some partiality for sugar and jam and such like little things!

Once indeed our poor Treasurer lost a valuable Spider and horses; he bore the trial beautifully and uncomplainingly.

Once no candles were to be had, and we sat at our evening meal with the cheerful light of two little Christmas candles, a pink and a green.

Of course they soon burnt out, upon which we laughed and retired to bed.

Then there was no soap, I made some, I put too much caustic soda into my mixture and it burnt our hands.

One day no matches were to be obtained. All this, if somewhat trying, was distinctly ludicrous.

Often a kind friend would send us a small cake of soap and a few candles from the stock which she had been enabled to lay in.

The only thing approaching to a *real* trial was the knowing so little of what was going on around us, for of course our mails were greatly delayed.

We had to wait a very long time for letters; a Cape newspaper of two or three weeks old was hailed with delight by us.

At last one day I saw our British Resident making some public statement, which was being cheered to the echo.

It was the relief of Ladysmith ! I came home and tinkled the little mission bell enthusiastically. I doubtless made my arms ache, but the sound produced was so feeble that my joy bell could not be well heard.

Sir Godfrey gave the Basutos at Maseru three oxen as a reward for their self-control and obedience.

A leg of beef was apportioned to our mission-school. I am thankful to say the festive portions were administered by the catechist and did not enter our compound.

The cooking alone would have been a terrible difficulty, and I was thankful that this task was allotted to Eliza n'Dobe rather than to our native servants.

My housekeeper told me one day that some of our British soldiers in Maseru were going about trying to get a cup of tea.

Two of them passed our front gate (on which there is a cross), one was heard to say—

“We might get a cup of tea and a blessing there !”

“Hush !” replied the other man.

Poor fellows, they got both.

I fetched a stray man into the “Everything-room” ; he tethered his horse to the gate, and thirteen other private soldiers followed, a nice little party for an “aged deaconess ?”

They were delightfully pleasant, and pleased with the very little we could do for them, and when we had emptied our larder, we stuffed their pockets with peaches out of the garden.

“Look here, Mother,” said one of them, “what do you think is the queerest thing to us in all this ? It is *sitting on a chair.*”

When I told the Director about our male guests, he was delighted.

They took me, I suppose, for a nun, and I had to explain that I was a deaconess, which is indeed a different thing.

I have purposely avoided touching upon things out of my own province, and have said nothing about the conduct of the Basutos during the war.

Of our own congregation I may not unbecomingly say a few words.

Many a Sunday during the bad days of the war, the National Anthem was sung in our little School-Chapel, and on one occasion, when I played it as a voluntary, the Catechist and other natives returned from outside to sing it.

The natives of this little mission are taught to fear God, but they are also taught to honour the king! and these influences, I believe, simple and natural as they are, tell upon them, and in their small way help the Government of the country.

When early in 1901, our hearts were grieving at the death of our beloved Queen Victoria, our people at the mission sympathized. The Sunday following her death, we had the simplest possible memorial service, and I asked the Catechist to close the morning prayer without giving a sermon.

Then the people all sat down, and I sat down with them and told them such simple anecdotes of our great Queen's life as I could remember, and they understand.

They were deeply interested and touched, and went home talking of the "Mother" who had been taken from them.

When King Edward VII. was proclaimed at Maseru, Mr. Sloley (the British Resident who

succeeded Sir Godfrey) kindly invited me to be present.

I was seated with other spectators on a raised stand at the head of a very large compound where a number of Basutos were gathered together.

One chief after another made a speech, and then Lerothodi (the Paramount Chief) made his concluding address.

I am only going to reproduce one remark of his speech, but before doing so, I must tell my reader *first* that natives speak of being conquered as being "eaten up," and next that common dinner etiquette amongst the Basutos is to sit round a three-legged pot containing the much relished porridge.

One man perhaps owns a rough metal spoon, another, less favoured, gets hold of a stick, whilst a third, who is not very *comme il faut*, eats with his fingers.

Lerothodi said something to the following effect (his remarks being rendered into English by the Government translator)—

"We were all *in the pot* ready to be eaten up, when the Queen of England came to our help."

He referred, of course, to the ready protection of Basutoland in 1868, granted by the British Government through Sir Philip Wodehouse.

Of course, in 1900, there could not be any confirmation at our Mission-Chapel, but in March, 1901, our hearts were gladdened by a visit from our dear Bishop Webb, who had returned for a short time to his old diocese as Vicar-General.

He confirmed fifteen of our natives in the presence of Mr. and Mrs. Sloley, and other leading European friends, who showed much kindly interest in the ceremony.

The already enlarged chapel was crowded beyond endurance. One was thankful to escape from the sense of heat and suffocation.

It was therefore settled later on, by Bishop Webb and the then Dean of Bloemfontein, as well as by our own Rural Dean of Basutoland, that I, after some twenty-four years of absence in South Africa, should pay a visit to England in order to seek help towards the building of a large church for our native congregation.

The mission *income* is only about three pounds, arising from sixty pounds ten shillings which I once collected towards a Catechist Endowment Fund.

Our Basutos are mostly of a poor class.

The Government does indeed help educational work; but it gives the Church a lump sum, which has to be sub-divided according to the needs and requirements of the Schools.

Out of this fund we receive £16 per annum, which is granted to the "school-of-work." During my absence, this school has had to be closed, but I believe the grant is still given to the mission for the general school, to be transferred to the school-of-work on its reopening.

In spite of the brave efforts of the earliest missionaries, Basutoland still needs earnest work to be done in it by the Church of its guardian country, and the liberal help of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel is, if I mistake not, mainly applied to the stipends of clergy, etc.

The proposed church is not only to be a gift to the Basutos, but also a memorial to the holy Bishop from whom death has lately separated us.

If, however, we need a church for our Basutos,

we also need educated, refined English gentlewomen as missionaries.

Men are trying to do what they can for the boys ; will not women come and work with the girls ?

Women are coming grandly to the front as teachers and nurses, will they not come to the front as Servants of the Church ?

Will they not identify themselves with one of our noble missionary societies, and work in a definite practical way without necessarily binding themselves by vows ? Will not some of our real English ladies do for God what mere worldly and vulgar women would scorn to do ? Will they not tuck up their sleeves and learn to iron and to cook, that they may train native women in the right way ?

Do they say "That is not spiritual work !" My reply is "*All* work for Christ is *spiritual* work, for the love of Christ in our hearts is sure to put the work of Christ in our hands."

We have religious teaching to impart also, we have the sick to visit, classes to instruct for Holy Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Communion.

The helping the sick is very important. One poor man, to whom we sent a little soup and milk, and whom we visited, said with his friends—

"We have never known anything like this before ! The English Church must be the true Church."

Some of our own natives are missionaries ; they go on Sundays to a little settlement of comparatively raw heathen, and try to help them ; so "raw" are they that I caught one little black boy not singing the hymn with us, but dancing to the tune, which happened to be lively.

This little River mission needs a missionary teacher sadly. Our natives long for Church teaching. Do not let us suffer them to go out at their death into darkness when we ourselves shall, in our dying hour, be stretching out our hands to Christ!

NOTE.—Our dwelling-house, our school-chapel, our laundry, our school teachers, our repairs, and a part of our own housekeeping expenses are all supplied through the generous sympathy of friends in South Africa, and such funds are collected by me personally.

Thank God I have lately had occasion to know how warm are the hearts in dear old England, my own mother country, for in addition to more than £800 subscribed, the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge has lately voted us a grant of £180.

The sum which I have collected has now, therefore, reached the amount of £1037.

I have had, however, to endure something of a disappointment. We named £1000 as the sum required, together with £100 for expenses. An architect in England, and a builder near Maseru (the latter knowing South African prices), both state that this amount is wholly inadequate.

I am wishing for a plain but church-like stone building (the stone to be quarried close by).

I feel that it should be very simple, with but little ornamentation of any kind, but with solid fittings, and a simple baptistery for the baptizing of our natives in the primitive way. An excellent site has been allotted to us by Government, and I cannot help hoping that we may yet raise sufficient funds for such a church as I have indicated.

I have written to Bishop Chandler, and to our Rural Dean, about the matter, asking them to fix the outside sum for which I have to plead.

The Rural Dean has already been told at Maseru by the builder that the sum originally named was absolutely under-estimated, and he will perfectly understand the present position of things.

I think I may mention that when I undertook the collecting for this church I requested that a special treasurer should be appointed.

Bishop Chandler asked Mr. Stuart Johnson, of 4, Eaton Place, London, S.W., to undertake this office, and it is my own special desire that all monies for the church should be sent to him.—5th July, 1902.

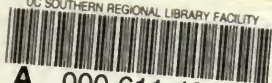
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